



News Release

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Diabetes costs the state billions of dollars each year

The percent of Washington residents with diabetes has nearly doubled over the last two decades

OLYMPIA — Diabetes takes a huge toll on people who have the disease, and also costs the state billions every year. According to a recent study, the outlook on the diabetes situation doesn't seem to be improving.

Diabetes in Washington led to direct medical costs of \$3.75 billion in 2012. This figure is expected to mushroom to \$5.39 billion (in 2012 dollars) in 10 years. These costs and the impact on the health and wellbeing of Washington residents is why the state legislature is studying [how to respond to the diabetes epidemic](#). The percent of adults with diabetes has nearly doubled in Washington since the early 1990s.

About 1-in-8 adults (more than 640,000) people have diabetes. More than a fourth of them are not aware they have it. Nearly two million more people in the state have pre-diabetes. They're on the verge of developing the disease, but still have an opportunity to prevent it.

Nearly 95 percent of all diabetes cases are Type 2. This type is affected by things we can change, such as our weight, physical activity, blood pressure, cholesterol, and smoking. Diabetes also hits certain age, ethnic and social demographics harder than others. People who are over 45-years-old, overweight, have a family history with the disease, have high blood pressure, are physically active fewer than three times per week, or have ever had gestational diabetes (occurring during pregnancy) are at increased risk.

For those with pre-diabetes, the Diabetes Prevention Program has been proven to prevent Type 2 diabetes. The program is available in most communities in Washington, in English and Spanish. State residents can call 211 or check the organization's website to [find a nearby Diabetes](#)

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[Prevention Program](#). People with diabetes can get help with managing the disease from their health care provider, a diabetes education program, and self-management support.

Diabetes Alert Day is Tuesday, March 24 and is being sponsored by the American Diabetes Association. Later this year, the association is planning “Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes” events in cities across the country, including in Seattle and Tacoma.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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